

ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT

COVERING THE PERIOD:

OCTOBER 2014 - SEPTEMBER 2015

Heart of the Matter Program

Save a Child's Heart



PRESENTED TO



Cooperative Agreement No: Cooperative Agreement No. AID-294-A-13-00016

Award level: \$1,000,000

Annual Report – Year 2

Date of submission: December 24, 2015

Prepared by: Inbal Shaviv

Approved by: Simon Fisher

Submitted to: Larisa Mori

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

1. ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM SUMMARY	3
2. YEAR 2 PROGRAM SUMMARY	4
Program Objectives.....	4
Program Accomplishments for the Reporting Period	4
Summary	5
October 2014-September 2015 Outputs.....	6
Activity 1: Outreach Training Program	8
<i>Partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of Health and the Palestine Medical Complex</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Training of Palestinian Physicians at the Wolfson Medical Center</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Psychosocial and Conflict Mitigation Training</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>International Medical Conferences</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Local Seminars</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Joint Palestinian-Israeli Medical Committee</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Equipment Purchase</i>	<i>17</i>
Activity 3: Support and Dialogue Group	19
<i>Dialogue Group Sessions.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Capacity Building and Conflict Mitigation Training</i>	<i>21</i>
Activity 4: Palestinian and Israeli Youth Volunteer Program	22
Activity 5: Change in Perception Survey and Report	23
4. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA	24
5. CHALLENGES	28
6. PROJECT RESULTS AND IMPACT	30

1. ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM SUMMARY

Save a Child's Heart (SACH) is an international, non-profit organization, based in Israel, with the mission of improving the quality of pediatric cardiac care for children from around the world. Founded in 1996, SACH provides life-saving heart surgeries and follow-up care for as many children as possible while simultaneously creating centers of medical competence in developing countries that enables local physicians, trained by SACH, to treat patients from their own communities. SACH is dedicated to the principle that every child deserves the best medical treatment available, regardless of the child's nationality, religion, gender or financial situation. All SACH cardiac care medical procedures and training activities take place at the Wolfson Medical Center (WMC) in Holon, Israel, an affiliate of the Sackler School of Medicine at the Tel Aviv University.

To date, SACH has saved the lives of over 4,000 children, approximately 250 children per year, from 50 developing countries in Africa, South America, Europe, Asia and throughout the Middle East, including the Palestinian Authority – West Bank and Gaza, as well as Iraq and Syria. Nearly half of the children treated by SACH are from the Palestinian Authority (PA), West Bank and Gaza. Since its establishment, SACH has also trained nearly 100 physicians and nurses from 17 countries in Israel. This training improves the skills and builds the capacity of medical personnel in developing countries, making pediatric care more available and accessible in local communities in these countries. SACH travels annually to partner sites in developing countries to hold joint cardiology clinics with its partner cardiologists for children awaiting surgery and for children who have undergone surgery in the past.

The Heart of the Matter program, SACH's flagship program, aims to improve relations among Palestinians and Israelis by providing increased encounters between the two populations through joint activities in the health sector and by working together towards improving pediatric cardiac care services in the PA. The Heart of the Matter program's overall objective is to contribute to the reduction of the effects of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis by focusing on issues of common concern and by changing the perception of one another through collaboration and cooperation within the health sector. This overall objective is gradually achieved by increasing the interaction between Palestinians and Israelis who together work towards building institutional health-related capacity of the PA by (1) providing increased encounters between Palestinian and Israeli medical personnel with the shared goal of building a self-sustaining capacity in pediatric cardiac care within the West Bank, (2) enabling opportunities for collaboration and cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis who share a common interest in the health sector and (3) building upon already established direct civil society relationships and inter-governmental cooperation related to the field of medicine. The Heart of the Matter program works with Palestinian and Israeli medical personnel and children despite political deterioration in the region. This was highlighted both in the first year of this USG during the Summer 2014 violence and in the rise of violence which began in the fourth quarter of Y2 and continues since into Y3. The program has successfully integrated both top-down government led and bottom-up grassroots led cooperation by increasing the interactions and relationship on a people-to-people level as well as institution-to-institution level of intervention. This was demonstrated throughout the past year between Palestinian and Israeli youth, children's caretakers and medical physicians, hospitals, and governmental institutions.

2. YEAR 2 PROGRAM SUMMARY

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To provide training, knowledge and expertise in the field of pediatric cardiac care;
- To facilitate joint medical activities between medical personnel from the Palestinian Authority (PA), Israel and the international medical community;
- To facilitate programs bringing together Palestinian and Israeli families and youth through the provision of pediatric medical treatment in Israel in the short term and in Palestinian hospitals in the long term.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE REPORTING PERIOD

- Four physicians are training at the Wolfson Medical Center (WMC) in Holon. Two continued from the first year of this USG and two joined the program in the second year of this USG;
- SACH held four medical seminars between the Palestine Medical Complex (PMC) and Wolfson Medical Center (WMC);
- One Palestinian and one Israeli physician participated in an international medical conference in Oxford;
- Thirty-seven support and dialogue groups were held with 125 Palestinian and Israeli caretakers;
- SACH hired Dr. Flor Guttman to be the program's new Conflict Mitigation Specialist;
- Dr. Flor Guttman met with the Palestinian physicians on a monthly basis;
- SACH received nearly all quotes for the medical equipment to be purchased through this USG;
- SACH, with the support and assistance of USAID, resolved the problem of obtaining permits for Palestinian Seeds of Peace (SoP) volunteers.
- SACH held 15 volunteer days with 51 Palestinian and Israeli youth volunteers in partnership with Seeds of Peace (SoP) at the free weekly cardiology clinic at WMC dedicated to Palestinian children from the West Bank and Gaza;
- Midgam, the external evaluation company SACH commissioned to run the program evaluation, completed writing-up and translating the questionnaires for both families and physicians;
- Midgam completed the first phase of the survey and completed all interviews for Palestinian and Israeli physicians along with half of the interview of Palestinian and Israeli families.

3. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY

The second year of the Heart of the Matter program, supported in part by the United States Agency of International Development (USAID), was dedicated to the continued implementation of program activities and to making up for outputs that were not implemented in the first year of the program. Many activities that were originally planned for the first year of the USG were inevitably postponed to the second year of the USG.

The most significant outcome of the second year of the program has been the continued implementation of program activities. SACH has successfully met its goals and objectives for the joint medical activities between the Palestine Medical Complex (PMC) and the Wolfson Medical Center (WMC), the youth volunteer program in partnership with Seeds of Peace (SoP) and the external evaluation of the program. SACH has also proved its strong partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of Health (PMOH) over the past year.

The program is internally and externally evaluated to examine long and short term impact on Palestinian and Israeli participants. The program is internally monitored and evaluated by SACH staff through multiple facets and monitoring techniques. All program participants are required to submit feedback SACH's compliance officer. These reports are made available to stakeholders, including USAID, upon request. The program is externally evaluated by Midgam, led by Dr. Mina Zemach, with the guidance and supervision of Dr. Levav. Dr. Levav acted as the program's Conflict Mitigation Specialist in the first half of the USG. He now supports the program voluntarily.

The program's smooth implementation is affected by the political environment in the region. It is important to highlight that during surges of violence in the region, especially during the summer 2014 violence, SACH continues to provide medical services to Palestinian children and training to Palestinian medical personnel from the West Bank and Gaza. However, CMM and people-to-people activities are increasingly difficult to implement during these times.

OCTOBER 2014-SEPTEMBER 2015 OUTPUTS

Activity	Estimate	Actual
Activity 1 – Medical Training Program - Implement an outreach training program for Palestinian physicians.	5 training positions filled	Four Palestinian physicians trained at the WMC during this reporting period. Physicians trained in the field of radiology (1), cardiac surgery (2) and anesthesiology (1).
Activity 2 - Joint Medical Activities - Consultation on cases during face-to-face meetings, through telephone calls or during quarterly visits to the WMC or Palestinian Ministry of Health (PMOH) facility such as the PMC.	4 meetings will be held annually	Two official meetings of the Joint Palestinian-Israeli Medical Committee were held in the second year of this USG. The meetings were both formal and informal and were held in the West Bank and Israel.
Activity 2 - Joint Medical Activities - Host medical seminars with Palestinian and Israeli physicians participating together.	2 medical seminars with 15 Palestinian and 15 Israeli medical personnel.	Four medical seminars were held during the second year of this USG. The seminars were held on October 31, 2014, December 18, 2014, February 27, 2015 and June 12, 2015.
Activity 2 - Joint Medical Activities - Attendance at international medical conferences	2 Palestinian physician and 2 Israeli physician attending 2 international medical conferences abroad for a total of 4 physicians over the course of the year	One Palestinian and one Israeli jointly participated in an international medical conference in Oxford on November 13-16, 2014.
Activity 2 - Joint Medical Activities - Purchase medical equipment for the WMC and the PMOH that will enable joint examinations, evaluations and treatment of children, followed by consultations and ongoing work relations.	To purchase for the Palestinian Medical Complex: Echocardiograph Ultrasound Machine, Blood Vessels Ultrasound, Blood Gas Machine and Airway Mablescope. To purchase a new heart-lung machine for the WMC	SACH continued to work in cooperation with the PMOH and the PMC to finalize the medical equipment that will be purchased through this USG. The list of equipment was approved by USAID and the medical equipment companies SACH solicited quotes from were vetted by USAID. SACH began to purchase medical equipment in the first quarter of Y3 after this reporting ended.

Activity 3 - Facilitate a weekly support and dialogue group for Palestinian and Israeli families, whose children are hospitalized at the WMC for any medical condition.	A weekly support and dialogue group will be held for approximately 60 Palestinian and Israeli family members, with children hospitalized at the WMC for any medical condition.	SACH held 37 support and dialogue group sessions with 125 Palestinian and Israeli parents and caretakers whose children are hospitalized at WMC. The sessions provide parents with a safe and emotionally supportive place to discuss their child's hospitalization and medical condition.
Activity 4 - Host a joint Palestinian and Israeli Youth Volunteer Program at the WMC with SACH's sub-awardee, Seeds of Peace.	2 Palestinian and 2 Israeli youth will jointly volunteer at the WMC Palestinian cardiology clinic at least twice a month. The total will be 48 youth, 24 Palestinian and 24 Israeli who volunteer and assist the families and medical staff at the WMC throughout the year.	Fifteen volunteer days were held with 51 volunteers at WMC in partnership with Seeds of Peace (SoP) youth volunteers. The volunteer days are jointly attended by Palestinian and Israeli graduates of the SoP International Camp. The volunteer days contribute to the volunteers' leadership skills and help mitigate anxiety of Palestinian children during the Tuesday Free Clinic for Palestinian children from the West Bank and Gaza.

ACTIVITY 1: OUTREACH TRAINING PROGRAM

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PALESTINIAN MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND THE PALESTINE MEDICAL COMPLEX

Save a Child's Heart (SACH) developed the Heart of the Matter project in response to the weakness of the Palestinian Authority in providing basic social services to the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza. This need is especially evident in the field of pediatric cardiac care services which are unobtainable in hospitals in the West Bank and Gaza. SACH believes that an under-developed infrastructure fuels negativity and criticism against the PA over its ability to function as an autonomous government and thus developed the Heart of the Matter project to strengthen services to the Palestinian population and to build the healthcare capacity of Palestinian medical personnel working in the West Bank. The program seeks to ultimately enable the establishment of a cardiac center at the Palestine Medical Complex (PMC) in Ramallah in the West Bank and to improve the quality of life for Palestinian children and their families. The partnership establishing this program and the assessment of the medical needs in the PA are found in the MOU signed by the Palestinian Ministry of Health (PMOH) and SACH in February of 2012 with a follow up letter of commitment signed July 2013 that designates the PMC in Ramallah as the partner hospital for Heart of the Matter.



From left to right: Israeli Olga Gor, Israeli Dr. Sagi Assa, Israeli Dr. Lior Sasson, Israeli Dr. Othman Badir, and Palestinian Dr. Ahmed Zarour perform a combined open heart surgery and catheterization procedure on a Palestinian baby from the West Bank.

Through Heart of the Matter the PMOH and the PMC receive the facilities and training to develop a state of the art center for pediatric cardiac care in the West Bank. The relationship with the PMOH and the PMC is coordinated by SACH's Palestinian Program Coordinator, Dr. Wafiq Othman, who acts as a consultant under this USG. Dr. Othman trained through SACH at the WMC for seven year prior to returning to the West Bank where he works as an anesthesiologist. Dr. Othman works as a private physician and not under the PMOH in the West Bank.

SACH continued to work in cooperation with PMOH and PMC throughout the second year of this USG. The cooperation with PMOH and PMC is central for building the capacity of PMC in the field of pediatric cardiology in the West Bank. Dr. Wafiq Othman, SACH Palestinian Program Coordinator, held several meetings with PMOH and PMC officials to gain their support and assistance in implementing program activities throughout the second year of this USG. The success of these meetings was evident in the implementation of the four medical seminars during this past year. PMOH and PMC's commitment to the program was also evident in their involvement in the outreach training program admissions process and purchase of medical equipment for PMC.

On October 14, 2014, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Flora Baraguti, Head of Pediatric ICU at the PMC, to review and finalize the list of medical equipment that the PMC is interested in purchasing through this USG. Dr. Baraguti and PMC submitted the list at the second Joint Palestinian-Israeli Medical Committee meeting during the previous reporting period (see Q4 narrative report).

On October 16, 2014, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Ahmad Betawe, director of PMC, to prepare for the medical seminar that took place on October 30, 2014. The two physicians agreed on the 15 Palestinian participants in the

seminar and Dr. Othman collected the necessary information about some of the participants for USAID vetting purposes and for entry permit requirements to Israel. The physicians also discussed the content of the medical seminar. It was agreed that two Palestinians would present on behalf of PMC, Dr. Hamad Madi, a resident at PMC who later trained through SACH's outreach training program, on open heart surgery and Dr. Baraguti, on vascular rings.

On October 19, 2014, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Ahmad Darwaze, Head of Cardiac Surgery at the PMC, to collect the ID information of the Palestinian participants for USAID vetting requirements. Dr. Othman and Dr. Darwaze also went over their lectures for the medical seminar. The two physicians discussed the candidates of SACH's outreach training program and went over the expectations of PMC and the WMC of the new training program. At the beginning of this second year of this USG, two physicians continued the SACH Outreach Training Program, see below, from year one. SACH was recruiting three new physicians for the program for the remaining months of the USG. Dr. Darwaze, who has supported SACH since the Heart of the Matter program began, is an important advocate for the program and his support is essential in ensuring PMC's commitment to the program. Dr. Darwaze has worked closely with Dr. Othman during the second year of this USG to ensure that the PMC fully participates in the medical seminars and submits all required forms to SACH for the outreach training program. Final approval of the IDs was given in a meeting between the two physicians on October 29, 2014.

On October 22, 2014, Dr. Othman met again with Dr. Darwaze to ensure his continued advocacy and involvement for the program in 2015 and that he will work closely with Dr. Betawe to ensure that the three new candidates for the outreach training program submit their forms to SACH. Dr. Darwaze is involved in selecting the candidates and overseeing the outreach training program, along with Dr. Betawe, on behalf of PMC.

On November 7, 2014, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Betawe, Dr. Darwaze and Dr. Baraguti to outline program objectives and priorities for 2015. The meeting succeeded in gaining PMC's full understanding and support for both medical and CMM priorities of the program. The physicians reviewed the progress reports of the five Palestinian physicians who were training through SACH at the time. The physicians agreed on the following requests and updates for 2015 and submitted a letter to SACH in this regard:

1. Dr. Ala'a Hasan, Radiology – Dr. Hasan was asked to continue her training at the WMC. Her training will continue through this USG.
2. Dr. AbdelKarim Adas, Cardiac Surgery – The PMOH has asked that Dr. Adas end his training at the WMC after December 2014.
3. Dr. Ahmad Zarour, Cardiac Surgery – Dr. Zarour was asked to continue his training at the WMC. His training will continue through this USG.
4. Dr. Naser Wreidat in the field of Pediatric Intensive Care – Dr. Wreidat completed his training in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit in September 2014.
5. Dr. Khaled Obeid in the field of Pediatric Cardiology – Dr. Obeid is currently on leave due to an exam in the West Bank. PMC has asked Dr. Obeid to continue his training at the WMC, which is estimated to end in 2016. He did not return to train at the WMC during the second year of the USG and is unlikely to return in the third year of the USG.

On January 22, 2015, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Betawe, Director of PMC, and Ms. Salam alRatrut, Director of Nurses at the PMC, to discuss the application status of Palestinian nurses to the program. While the training

program for nurses is not funded through this USAID grant, the Heart of the Matter project includes training for nurses as it is SACH's goal to train a full pediatric cardiology team from the PMC. This will better equip the PMC to treat Palestinian children.

On January 30, 2015, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Betawe to discuss PMC's partnership with SACH and the outreach training program for Palestinian physicians. PMC is fully committed to the project but the process of applying for the outreach training program for physicians and nurses, proved to be much longer than SACH anticipated. As discussed above, three of the five Palestinian physicians who were training in 2014 did not return to training in 2015 and thus SACH asked the PMC to submit applications for the three openings for the remaining of this USG.

Dr. Naser Wreidat completed his training in September 2014 and Dr. AbdelKarim Adas ended his training in December 2014. Dr. Adas has continued to train through SACH in cardiac surgery over this reporting period but his training is no longer an official part of Heart of the Matter due to PMOH requests. Dr. Othman raised SACH's concern over the admissions process and highlighted SACH's full commitment to assisting PMC in this process so the Palestinian physicians can begin their training at the WMC. Dr. Othman and Dr. Betawe discussed the training status of each trainee during their meeting. Dr. Obeid, who trained in pediatric cardiology until September 2014, is still on leave due to an exam in the West Bank. PMC asked Dr. Obeid to return to training in 2015, however he did not receive approval from the PMOH. Dr. Othman raised this issue to Dr. Betawe and SACH has worked with Dr. Abu Ghali, Director of Hospitals at the PMOH, to resolve this challenge but Dr. Obeid has not returned to train at the WMC during the second year of this USG.

On February 4, 2015, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Betawe and Dr. Darwaze to discuss the application process for the Palestinian physicians. SACH has been working with the PMC and PMOH over this reporting period to secure the documents required to train at the WMC. This process proved to be more challenging than originally anticipated because the two trainees, Dr. Madi and Dr. AbuHaltam have had difficulties in translating all certification documents properly.

On March 13, 2015 and on March 25, 2015 Dr. Othman met with Dr. Darwaze to discuss the outreach training program and the integration of the Palestinian physicians in their respective departments at the WMC. Dr. Othman and Dr. Darwaze also discussed the outreach training program for Palestinian nurses, which is not funded through this USG but is part of the EU Partnership for Peace grant. The EU Partnership for Peace grant co-funds many elements of this USG, including the training of Palestinian physicians.

On April 28, 2015, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Betawe to discuss the progress made in the physicians' training and how the PMC can further benefit from the project. The physicians also discussed the equipment to be purchased through this USG and the seminar that took place on June 12, 2015.

On July 26, 2015, Dr. Othman met with director of the PMC, Dr. Betawe and with Dr. Ahmed Zarour, one of the Palestinians training through this USG at the WMC. The physicians discussed Dr. Zarour's training progress at the WMC and the outreach training program for PMC physicians. Dr. Betawe was satisfied with the progress and asked Dr. Zarour to continue his training through 2016.

On August 25, 2015, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Betawe and Dr. Darwaze, Head of Cardiac Surgery at the PMC. Dr. Othman outline the progress made in the outreach training program for each of the physicians mentioned above.

TRAINING OF PALESTINIAN PHYSICIANS AT THE WOLFSON MEDICAL CENTER

For pediatric cardiac medical treatment in developing countries to be holistic and sustainable, local medical teams need the facilities and skills to treat children in their own communities. At the center of the Heart of the Matter program lies SACH's outreach training program. The outreach training program activities are part of SACH's larger objective to create centers of medical competence in developing countries and to provide urgently needed pediatric cardiac care and follow-up care to children suffering from heart disease. The strategy is based on this understanding and we work with partner sites from around the world to build sustainable local capacity in the field of pediatric cardiology where children will ultimately be treated in their own community by local medical personnel. The training program was developed with the long-term goal of improving the access to pediatric cardiac care services for Palestinian children in the West Bank. Through this USG, SACH has partnered with the PMC, through the existing partnership with the PMOH, as the partner site in the PA.

During the second year of this USG, four Palestinian physicians, one female and three male, were trained through SACH at the WMC. The physicians are:

- Dr. Ala'a Hasan, training in radiology under Dr. Elias Sorin, Head of the Radiology Department.
- Dr. Ahmed Zarour, training in cardiac surgery under Dr. Lior Sasson, Head of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Department
- Dr. Abdelhaleem AbuHaltam, training in anesthesiology under Professor Tiberiu Ezri, Head of the Anesthesiology Department
- Dr. Hamad Madi, training in cardiac surgery with Dr. Lior Sasson, Head of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Department

The PMC has asked to withdraw Dr. Madi from the training program in July 2015 due to a combination of personal reasons and training priorities and staff needs at the PMC.

In addition to the above four physicians whose training is funded through this USG, SACH is overseeing the training of two more Palestinian physicians at the WMC. Their training is not funded through this USG because they are not affiliated with the PMC, a condition under this USG. The two physicians include:

- Dr. Moued Hamad, training in anesthesiology under Professor Tiberiu Ezri, Head of the Anesthesiology Department
- Dr. Abdel Karim Adas, training in cardiac surgery under Dr. Lior Sasson, Head of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Department

Dr. Adas was part of the initial Heart of the Matter program. After reviewing his credentials and progress, PMC decided to discontinue his training. This decision is outlined in the minutes from the second meeting of the Joint Palestinian-Israeli Medical Committee, held on September 30, 2014. The minutes were shared with USAID with Q4 narrative report. SACH decided to continue Dr. Adas's training due to the investment already made in Dr. Adas outside of this USG.

For each of the physicians, a written progress report was written and submitted to SACH by their training department at the WMC.

Dr. Hasan joined the Outreach Training program in 2013 and has trained under Dr. Elias Sorin at the Radiology Department at the WMC since. Dr. Sorin reports that Dr. Hasan has shown increased capacities in diagnosis and readings of imaging exams of neuro, chest and stomach. She has shown control over CT imaging and BODY US exams. She has also shown control over screenings in the fields of gastro and urology. She acts as a physician on duty and is fully integrated in the radiology department at the WMC. Dr. Hasan has also taken the first step exam but unfortunately did not pass this stage. Dr. Sorin emphasized that while this is disappointing, he is confident that she will successfully pass the exam in the upcoming months. She is expected to retake the exam in 2016. In the upcoming months she is also planned to complete a rotation in MRI screening and invasive angiography.

Dr. Zarour joined the Outreach Training program in 2013 and has trained under Dr. Lior Sasson since. Dr. Sasson reports that he has witness an increase in Dr. Zarour's capacity to independently carry out medical procedures during this past year. Dr. Zarour attends to nearly all pediatric and adult cardiac surgeries and other invasive procedures under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Sasson. Dr. Zarour participated in 102 surgeries between January to November 2015. He acted as a second surgeon in 20 of these surgeries and third surgeon in 82 surgeries. Dr. Zarour has also shown a greater independence in pre and post-operation care for patients during this reporting period.

Dr. Abu Haltam began his training under Professor Ezri in April 2015. Professor Ezri reports that the training is going well and Dr. Abu Haltam has successfully integrated in the department. Progress is steady and Dr. Abu Haltam's skill set and medical background proved to be extremely relevant for the training. Professor Ezri is confident that Dr. Abu Haltam will continue the training in the months to come and he will be a valuable asset to the PMOH.

Dr. Madi joined the Outreach Training program in May 2015 and has trained under Dr. Sasson. He was initially integrated into different departments, especially the PICU, to familiarize himself with the WMC setting and procedures. He was adapted to the Israeli medical system and learned how to receive patients after cardiac surgery. Following this brief introduction, he shadowed Dr. Sasson during this three-month training period at the WMC. In August 2015, the PMC has asked to withdraw Dr. Madi from the training program due to a combination of personal reasons and training priorities and staff needs at the PMC.

The four physicians also participated in two medical seminars run by SACH through the Heart of the Matter project. The seminars were held on February 27, 2015 and June 12, 2015 at the WMC. The seminars included thirty physicians from the PMC and the WMC together attending and presenting medical cases and lectures to senior staff from both institutions. Dr. Abu Haltam presented a lecture on "tissue perfusion markets" in the seminar held on February 27, 2015.

PSYCHOSOCIAL AND CONFLICT MITIGATION TRAINING

A Senior Conflict Mitigation Specialist specializing in "Do Not Harm" principles was hired to ensure that all of the activity components are well integrated and do not negatively impact the patients, their families or the community at large. Special attention is given to the Palestinian physicians training at the WMC and their emotional and professional needs while training in an Israeli medical institution.

The Conflict Mitigation Specialist hired for this project, Dr. Yitzhak Levav, continued to meet with Palestinian physicians training at the WMC through the Heart of the Matter program during this second year of this USG. The meetings are designed to address cross-cultural medical interactions and the specific conflict-mitigation challenges the Palestinian doctors raise. The meetings are based on Dr. Jeff Hoffman's framework that was designed especially for the Heart of the Matter project. The framework includes four overarching areas: (1) Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity; (2) Dealing with Personally Sensitive Topics; (3) Effective Listening and Discussions; and (4) Helping Patients Manage Stress. It is important to stress that many medical students undergo this type of training as part of their studies. The Palestinian physicians, however, explained that they rarely had an opportunity to discuss these topics and would like Dr. Levav to provide training in these areas.

In the second quarter of Y2, Dr. Levav informed SACH that he plans to end his consultancy due to personal reasons. He agreed to continue to supervise and oversee the external evaluation element of the project. To this end, SACH interviewed two new candidates, which were recommended by Dr. Levav, for the consultant position in March 2015. SACH hired Dr. Flor Gutman to become the new Senior Conflict Mitigation Specialist consultant. Dr. Guttmann was vetted by USAID upon hiring.

Dr. Guttmann met with the Palestinian physicians nearly twice a month since April 2015. Dr. Guttmann and the Palestinian medical personnel discussed two case studies of cross-cultural medical experiences and the medical personnel's experience working in an Israeli medical institution. Dr. Guttmann and the Palestinian medical personnel agreed to meet on a monthly basis and focus the sessions on two themes: cross-cultural differences in medical practices and the medical personnel's experience at the WMC. Participants reported that the meeting was very productive and both Dr. Guttmann and the Palestinian physicians expressed their interest in continuing the meetings in this format. The Palestinian physicians explained that having this support system is important for their successful integration at the WMC.

Activity 2: Joint Medical Activities

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL CONFERENCES



From left to right: Professor Giuseppe Tavilla from Italy, Dr. David Yaacobi from Israel, Professor David Taggart, chief Department of Cardiac Surgery at Oxford University, Dr. Abdel karim Adas from the PA, and Professor David Glineur from Belgium

SACH sent two physicians, one Palestinian and one Israeli, to an international medical conference in Oxford. The remaining medical conference from Y2 is postponed to Y3 of this USG.

On November 13-16, 2014 Palestinian Dr. Abdel Karim Adas and Israeli Dr. David Yaacobi participated in the European Masterclass in Arterial Revascularisation for Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting in Oxford. The masterclass focused on new surgical procedure techniques and complicated surgical procedures. The conference included interactive lab activities which strengthened the work between Dr. Adas and Dr. Yaacobi. The physicians heard about the event through an email advertisement that was sent to cardiac surgeons and residents worldwide. Physicians from across the world showed interest in the program and the cooperation between the two physicians in the lab. Both Dr. Adas and Dr. Yaacobi completed a questionnaire about the benefits of attending the international medical

conference together and the questionnaires are filed internally and are available upon request.

LOCAL SEMINARS

Four medical seminars were held during the second year of the program. The first two medical seminars held during this reporting period were rescheduled from Y1 to Y2.

The first seminar was held on October 30-31, 2014 with 16 Palestinians and 15 Israelis. The medical seminar began with opening remarks by Dr. Yitzhak Berlowitz, Director of the WMC and Dr. Lior Sasson, Head of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the WMC. The opening remarks were followed by lectures from physicians from the PMC and the WMC. The six medical lectures and presenters at the medical seminar included:

- Dr. Sagi Assa (Israeli), *Sudden cardiac death in athletes*
- Dr. Flora Baraguti (Palestinian), *Introduction to Vascular Rings*
- Prof. Tiberiu Ezri, M.D. (Israeli), *Cardiopulmonary resuscitation in the pregnant patient*
- Dr. Hamad Madi (Palestinian), *Open heart surgery among patient with CRF*
- Dr. David Yaacobi (Israeli), *Monocusp Pulmonic Valve Reconstruction in TOF repair*

Dr. Darwaze was scheduled to provide an additional lecture but canceled. Dr. Darwaze attended the seminar and engaged with the lectures throughout the event, raising important medical questions in the question/answer session that followed each lecture.

A highlight of the seminar was the lecture by Dr. Baraguti from the PMC. The lecture was exceptional both in terms of content and also by the fact that PMC chose to have her, a female physician who is the Head of the Pediatric ICU at the PMC, present a lecture and the conference. Dr. Baraguti returned from a fellowship at SickKids Hospital in Toronto and she has been an important asset in the Heart of the Matter program and the partnership with the PMC.

The seminar was also attended by USAID AOR at the time Ms. Rima Ghandour. During the seminar, Ms. Ghandour spoke with Dr. Betawe and Dr. Othman about the USAID CMM program and outlined the priorities under the USG. Dr. Othman outlined SACH priorities and clarified the differences between a medical institution's direct medical needs and USG priorities and the interests of SACH. Dr. Othman reiterated the importance of recognizing and addressing the medical priorities of PMC as an entry point to CMM partnership activities and actions with PMC and PMOH. It is important to highlight that while the conversation raised concerns over CMM priorities in the program, it took place at an extremely successful medical seminar that was jointly held and run by PMC and WMC. The cooperation between the two medical institutions was showcased throughout the medical seminar, from preparation to implementation. This cooperation during the event was exceptional, especially given the political climate in the region and the delay in many program outputs during the first year of the program.

Following the seminar, the physicians completed an internal assessment questionnaire that was designed to examine the effectiveness of the event and the interests of physicians for future seminars. The feedback was extremely positive and physicians from both the PMC and the WMC asked to include physicians from different departments in future SACH events. The physicians also asked for more interactive activities in future seminars

and not only medical lectures. Many physicians reported supported the inclusion of physicians from both the WMC and PMC in the event. The participants signed an attendance sheet. Both questionnaires and attendance sheet are filed internally by SACH.



Palestinian and Israeli participants at the Second Joint Seminar in Pediatric Cardiology, December 18, 2014

The second medical seminar was held on December 18, 2014 with 17 Palestinians and 13 Israelis. The seminar was led by Dr. Sion Houri, Director of the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit at the WMC. The seminar was catered towards medical residents from the PMC and the WMC. The seminar included the following lectures:

- Dr. Doron Gavish (Israeli), *Management of Respiratory Arrest*
- Dr. Abdelhaleem AbuHaltam (Palestinian), *Pulmonary Hypertension*
- Dr. Ahmad Zarour (Palestinian), *Truncus Arteriosus*
- Dr. Itzhak Levav (Israeli), *Cultural Competence in Pediatric Care*

Like the first seminar, the second seminar received exceptionally positive feedback from Palestinian and Israeli residents who attended. A highlight of the seminar was Dr. Levav's lecture on cultural awareness and sensitivity in the medical field. The presentation included a short activity where participants shared their experiences of working with patients and families from different cultures.

Following the seminar, Israeli residents who had attended asked to be invited to future SACH events and medical seminars. One physician asked if he could invite physicians who are not residents at the WMC to future SACH seminars. This request is an indicator that the event reached a broader community and expanded the number of people the Heart of the Matter program can engage.

The third seminar was held on February 27, 2015 and was led by Dr. Sasson. The seminar included twenty Palestinians, eleven Israelis and one German physician. This was the first seminar which included an international guest speaker.

The medical lectures and presenters at the medical seminar included:

- Dr. Katharina Schmitt (German), *Neuroprotection: Methods and Mechanisms to Protect the Brain*
- Dr. Abdelhaleem AbuHaltam (Palestinian), *Tissue Perfusion Monitoring*
- Dr. Zohar Landau (Israeli), *Childhood Diabetes*
- Dr. Hamad Madi (Palestinian), *Cardiac Surgery*
- Dr. Itzhak Levav (Israeli), *Cultural Competence in Pediatric Care*



Palestinian, Israeli and German participants at the Third Joint Seminar in Pediatric Cardiology, February 27, 2015

Dr. Sagi Assa, one of the Israeli participants in the seminar, completed a fellowship at the Deutsches Herzzentrum Berlin in 2014 under Dr. Schmitt's supervision. Dr. Assa returned to Israel in August 2014 and obtained the position as the Interventional Pediatric Cardiologist at the WMC where he joined the SACH medical team.

Dr. Hamad Madi who trained through SACH at the WMC during the second year of this USG was scheduled to provide an additional lecture but canceled, however he attended the seminar and engaged with the lectures throughout the event.

Dr. Schmitt and Dr. Levav's lectures were especially successful in this medical seminar. Dr. Levav's lecture was followed by a group activity that involved the active participation of attendees. Attendees were divided into groups of four, each group including both Palestinians and Israelis. Dr. Levav presented open questions in the field of cultural competence and the experience the physicians have had in delivering medical information to patients from cultures different from their own. The vibrant group discussions extended beyond the activity itself and Dr. Levav was asked to continue the lecture series in the upcoming medical seminar scheduled for the next reporting period.

The fourth medical seminar was held on June 12, 2015. The seminar included seven Palestinians and three Israelis participated in the medical seminar.

The medical lectures and presenters at the medical seminar included:

- Dr. Ahmed Zarour (Palestinian), *Coarctation of Aorta*
- Dr. Hamad Madi (Palestinian), *Congenital Coronary Fistula in Adult*
- Dr. Sion Hourli (Israeli), *Pain and Children*

Dr. Flor Guttman was scheduled to provide an additional lecture but canceled due to illness and was unable to attend the seminar.

SACH experienced major difficulties in reaching its goal of 15 Palestinian and 15 Israeli participants in this seminar. The seminar was originally planned for June 11, 2015 but was postponed to June 12, 2015 due to late arrival of the Palestinian delegation. Despite the late arrival of the delegation, SACH decided to implement the seminar rather than cancel it because hotel reservation was already booked for June 11, 2015. In total 14 Palestinians traveled from the West Bank to attend the seminar, however, only seven actually attended the seminar the next day. Postponement of the seminar also resulted in a low attendance rate of both Palestinian and Israeli participants.

JOINT PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI MEDICAL COMMITTEE

SACH established the Joint Palestinian-Israeli Medical Committee in the first year of this USG to provide a platform for physicians from the PMC and the WMC to work together under the Herat of the Matter project. The Joint Palestinian-Israeli Medical Committee adjourned twice during the second year of this USG. In addition to the two formal meetings, physicians from



the PMC and WMC regularly corresponded with one another informally throughout the year.

The first meeting was held on March 25, 2015 in Ramallah. Mr.

Simon Fisher, SACH Executive Director, travelled to Ramallah to meet with Dr. Betawe and Dr. Darwaze to discuss the progress

Left to right: Dr. Abdel Halim, Mr. Ashtia, Dr. Othman, Mr. Fisher and Dr. Darwaze

made in Heart of the Matter and how we can continue our cooperation with the PMC and PMOH through this project. This was the first time Mr. Fisher has traveled to Ramallah in over a year. As described in the third quarterly report, over the past year meetings took place through phone conversations and at the WMC only due to security concerns. This meeting was significant because it shows the dedication and commitment of both sides to the project amidst the political and security situation in the region.

Dr. Othman, Dr. Abdel Halim and nurse Habab Ashtia joined Mr. Fisher in the meeting with Dr. Betawe and Dr. Darwaze. The meeting took place at a hotel where Dr. Darwaze resides during his stays in Ramallah.

SACH is planning on submitting a manuscript to the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice for their upcoming special edition, Public Health Collaboration in a Region of Conflict: Lessons Learned in the Middle East in 2015. Dr. Betawe and Dr. Darwaze agreed to be signatories on the manuscript. This is an exceptional example of Israeli-Palestinian cooperation in the health sector. Submitting the manuscript to one of the most prestigious international medical journals attests to the commitment of both sides towards the Heart of the Matter program. This action shows how SACH has continued to work with the international medical community through this project.

On September 2, 2015, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Darwaze of the PMC, Dr. Sasson of the WMC and with Mr. Simon Fisher, Executive Director of SACH. The meeting was held at Dr. Othman's house in Bediya in the West Bank. The program has shown willingness on both the part of Israeli and Palestinian participants to see the program's successful implementation and smooth implementation. An important indicator of this is the travel of Israeli staff members to the West Bank and travel of Palestinian representatives of the PMC to Israel throughout the past two years, despite the political environment we are working in. During the meeting, discussions focused on the outreach training program for both physicians and nurses, the scheduling of purchase for medical equipment and specific medical cases that were referred to the WMC.

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE

Dr. Othman and Mr. Fisher worked closely with Dr. Betawe to finalize the list of equipment pieces the PMC is interested in purchasing during the second year of this USG.

The equipment purchase process has been taking longer than originally anticipated and has delayed the implementation of this program output. The WMC planned to purchase a heart-lung machine through this USG, however as a result of the delay and because of their immediate needs for a heart-lung machine; the WMC purchased this equipment independently and requested new equipment as part of this USG.

At the start of the second year of this USG, Dr. Betawe reviewed the list Dr. Baraguti submitted in the first year of this USG.

On January 22, 2015 Dr. Betawe sent a letter to SACH in support of the program, outlining the medical equipment PMC is interested in purchasing through the program and requests for the outreach training program.

Following the meeting between Mr. Fisher and the PMC in Ramallah, see above, Dr. Betawe presented Mr. Fisher with specifications for the ECHO machine and anesthesia machine. Mr. Fisher noted the differences between the quotes the PMC received from a company in East Jerusalem and the quote Mr. Fisher received from an Israeli company.

On July 27, 2015, Mr. Fisher and Dr. Othman met in Ramallah with PMC representatives and with Mr. Freddy Fickers, Deputy Consul General and Head of Development Cooperation at the Consulate General of Belgium in Jerusalem to discuss the purchase of medical equipment for the PMC and the outreach training program.

During the second year of this USG, SACH compiled the list of equipment pieces to be purchased through this USG. The PMC is interested in purchasing:

- Echo-cardiograph Machine
- Anesthesia Machine

The WMC is interested in purchasing:

- Bronchoscope
- 3 Ventilators
- Syringe pumps: 2 Asena docking stations with supporting 14 units of Asena GH plus w/Guardrais and 4 units of Asena GP Plus

The list was submitted to USAID for approval on June 10, 2015 so SACH can continue the procurement process. Mr. Jason Gilpin, Deputy Director, Office of Contracts and Management approved the list of equipment and estimates.

SACH has also asked to change the allocations of USAID and cost-share so USAID will fully cover the costs of equipment purchased for the PMC and SACH cover the costs for the WMC. The total USAID fund allocations did not change in the overall budget. This request was approved by USAID.

During September 2015, SACH submitted the vetting forms of all medical equipment companies for vetting. USAID requested SACH to resubmit these documents with additional information on individual companies. One company, ElDan, was sent for rush vetting and was approved in September. Since the second year of this USG ended, SACH resubmitted all amended vetting documents to USAID and all vetting requests were approved.

On September 6, 2015 and September 16, 2015, Dr. Othman met with Dr. Betawe and staff from the PMC that will use the medical equipment. The physicians discussed the timetable for purchasing the equipment and how it will be utilized at the PMC.

Dr. Betawe of the PMC reiterated the request that the procurement process should be carried out by SACH and not the PMOH due to the difficulties the PMC has experienced in purchasing the equipment through the PMOH in the past months. The PMC was pressured to acquire the equipment by October in time for the opening of an out-patient clinic that opened at the PMC at this time. The new out-patient clinic is run by Dr. Rula Awad and Dr. Mahmoud Nashashibi, two prominent Palestinian pediatric cardiologists serving the local Palestinian population in the West Bank. Dr. Awad trained through SACH at the WMC under Dr. Akiva Tamir, Head of the Pediatric Cardiology Department at the WMC, for three years. Both Dr. Awad and Dr. Nashashibi work closely with the

SACH program in the diagnosis and referrals of Palestinian patients to the WMC. Dr. Betawe feared that the equipment will not be acquired in time if he were to proceed the procurement through the PMOH and therefore asked SACH to carry out this activity.

Since the end of the second year of this USG, the ECHO machine was purchased for the PMC and delivered on October 6, 2015.

ACTIVITY 3: SUPPORT AND DIALOGUE GROUP

DIALOGUE GROUP SESSIONS

SACH held 37 support and dialogue group sessions during the second year of this USG. The support and dialogue groups were led by the Palestinian Families Coordinator, Ms. Fatma Sarsur, with the support and supervision of Dr. Levav and Dr. Guttman. The dialogue sessions for parents and family members focus on their concerns about their child's treatment and any broader conflict-related concerns or fears that may arise due to the political conflict environment. Many of the Palestinian families arrive at WMC with deep fears about Israelis and how they will be treated. Although they quickly realize that their child is being cared for in a purely medical and humanitarian manner, these sessions address many of their concerns directly and allow them to express them in a safe environment.

It is important to note that the hospitalization of Palestinian children is longer than Israeli children due to the type of medical procedures they undergo. For this reason SACH sometimes engages with the same Palestinian parents over a course of several weeks while the Israeli parents change every week. The aim of the dialogue group is to allow Palestinian and Israeli parents engage with as many parents and caretakers from the counter population. SACH was able to achieve this goal because of the different Israeli parents every week.

The dates of these sessions were:

- October 8, 2014
- October 14, 2014
- October 20, 2014
- October 27, 2014
- November 2, 2014
- November 13, 2014
- November 24, 2014
- December 1, 2014
- December 7, 2014
- December 15, 2014
- December 21, 2014
- December 29, 2014
- January 12, 2015
- January 18, 2015
- January 29, 2015
- February 5, 2015



Ms. Sarsur with Israeli and Palestinian caretakers, March 2, 2015

- February 12, 2015
- February 19, 2015
- February 23, 2015
- March 2, 2015
- March 9, 2015
- March 16, 2015
- March 23, 2015
- April 6, 2015
- April 16, 2015
- April 20, 2015
- April 29, 2015
- June 10, 2015
- June 17, 2015
- June 24, 2015
- July 23, 2015
- July 26, 2015
- August 2, 2015
- August 27, 2015
- September 3, 2015
- September 10, 2015
- September 17, 2015

In November 2014, once the academic year in Israel was underway, SACH reached out to faculty department heads at Tel Aviv University, Be'er Sheva University and Tel Aviv-Jaffa Academic College to help with recruiting student volunteers. The Heart of the Matter initiative was welcomed by all three academic institutions who reached students through email, Facebook, classes and notices on campus. Dozens of students contacted SACH and submitted applications to volunteer.

SACH recruited two Israeli volunteers to assist Ms. Sarsur during the support and dialogue group activities and at the Palestinian clinic on Tuesdays. Ms. Mona Jaber, a native Arabic speaking psychology student from Tel Aviv University was recruited to assist at the Palestinian clinic and Ms. Noa Gerara, a native Hebrew speaking psychology and political science student at Tel Aviv University was recruited to assist with encouraging Israeli families to join the support and dialogue group activity as well as help running them. Both volunteers were vetted by USAID and joined Ms. Sarsur in December.

On January 4, 2015, Ms. Sarsur, Ms. Inbal Shaviv, SACH compliance officer and Israeli program coordinator, and Ms. Noa Gerara, an Israeli student volunteer, met with Nurse Nava Gershon, Head Nurse of the Pediatrics Surgery Ward. SACH staff and Ms. Gershon outlined the goals of the Support and Dialogue Group activity and discussed how the nurses at the WMC can help Ms. Sarsur in recruiting Israeli families to the activity. Ms. Gershon was enthusiastic about the initiative. Ms. Gershon has helped Ms. Sarsur throughout the second year of this USG in introducing the activity to Israeli families and inviting parents to join Ms. Sarsur's parent support group.

In addition to this support from the medical staff at the WMC, a bilingual invitation was printed during this past year and proved to be an important tool in recruiting families to the Support and Dialogue Group activity. The invitations were handed to families in the pediatrics, PICU and surgery wards before the activity took place. The printed materials presented the SACH's activity and the parents' support group to families whose children are hospitalized at the WMC. SACH has also purchased new folding chairs to help address the location challenges Ms. Sarsur has experienced during the winter months. This proved to be helpful in making the support group activity more accessible to parents.

SACH has continued, however, to face major difficulties in recruiting Israelis to this activity throughout the past year. While this is not stated upfront, the continued violence in the region and heightened security situation, especially in the fourth quarter of Y2, has negatively affected the support and dialogue sessions. This has influenced the number of Israelis willing and interested in participating in these activities and continues to be a challenge in the third year of this USG. SACH is doing its best to include both Palestinians and Israelis in these activities but we are also aware of the sensitive environment we are working in which challenges the smooth implementation of people-to-people activities.



A Support and Dialogue session at the WMC on November 13, 2014. The session included ten parents and caretakers from Gaza and the West Bank.

It is important to stress that the Support and Dialogue Group activity has formal and informal quantitative outputs. Ms. Sarsur informally engaged dozens of Palestinian and Israeli parents and held conversations with both groups throughout the past year. SACH only counts participants that joined the group in its entirety and not for part of the session. Some parents join the group for part of the session but leave in the middle of the activity due to the child's hospitalization. Reasons for leaving include: meeting with nurses, test results that arrived during the session or a medical exam that takes place during the session. This is especially common among the Israeli parents because their child's hospitalization is most often for one day. Parents that leave during the session are not included in the actual head-count for the activity.

In spite of these difficulties, SACH is happy to report that we reached our total number of participants we set to reach during the second year of the program.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND CONFLICT MITIGATION TRAINING

An important element in the support and dialogue group activity relies on developing Ms. Sarsur's leadership skills and capacity to run the support and dialogue group sessions. Ms. Sarsur has been receiving guidance and support from Dr. Levav and Dr. Guttmann through one-on-one consultation sessions and reviews of internal reports of the sessions. Dr. Levav and Dr. Flor Guttmann guided and supervised Ms. Fatima Sarsur, the Palestinian Families Coordinator throughout this reporting period. Dr. Guttmann replaced Dr. Levav during the second year of the USG. With the exception of holidays and annual leave, the conflict mitigation specialist met with Ms. Sarsur twice a month and discussed the progress made in the Support and Dialogue Group activity throughout the second year of the project.

Ms. Sarsur is pleased with these meetings and reports that the sessions are very helpful. Dr. Guttman is open to hear the variety of difficulties Ms. Sarsur has experienced during this past year and has helped guide her throughout these challenges. Dr. Guttman suggested contacting Tel Aviv University and other academic institutions so Ms. Sarsur will have a student assistant that can help with recruiting Israeli families into Y3. The recruitment of Israeli families continues to be the main obstacle in this aspect of the program and SACH has been unable to reach its goal of having an equal number of Palestinian and Israeli participants in the sessions.

One of the issues that continues to be brought up by Ms. Sarsur, similarly to the winter in Y1, is the difficulty of holding sessions outside during the winter. SACH worked with the nursing staff to see where we can hold the session during the winter. Some sessions were held in empty patients' rooms during the winter months.

ACTIVITY 4: PALESTINIAN AND ISRAELI YOUTH VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Fifty-one Seeds of Peace (SoP) volunteers participated in fifteen volunteer days at the Free Palestinian Clinic Day at WMC during the past year. The dates of these volunteer days were:

- October 21, 2014
- October 28, 2014
- November 11, 2014
- November 25, 2014
- December 2, 2014
- December 9, 2014
- January 6, 2015
- January 27, 2015
- February 10, 2015
- February 24, 2015
- March 24, 2015
- April 14, 2015
- April 28, 2015
- May 12, 2015
- May 26, 2015



A Palestinian patient from the West Bank and a SoP volunteer. April 28, 2015

The volunteers' ages ranged from 15 to 18. Prior to their arrival at WMC, the volunteers are briefed by the SACH Volunteers Coordinator about SACH's work and the day's schedule.

SACH and SoP reached out to USAID at the end of the first year of this USG to help with securing permits for Palestinian youth to enter Israel. During the first year of the program, SACH faced major difficulties in securing permits for Palestinian youth, resulting in fewer Palestinians joining the program than planned. With the help of USAID, SACH secured permits throughout the second year of this USG.

The feedback the program received is that it makes a tremendous impact on both the SoP volunteers as well as the families of children receiving treatment. Many parents have called after their visit to thank the Seeds for their assistance, demonstrating the importance of the program and the support SoP volunteers provide. SoP reports that the partnership with SACH has helped it further the communication between Palestinian and Israeli Seeds and

that the program teaches them an important lesson about tolerance. The project also introduces the volunteers to the field of public health and the SoP interaction with different medical staff at the WMC introduces them to new potential careers in medicine and humanities.

On January 27, 2015 SoP Director of Middle East Programs Donna Stefano and Tel Aviv Office Administrator and Logistics Coordinator Adar Ziegel visited the SACH program. The visit included a tour of the WMC and observation of the SoP volunteer day activities at the free weekly clinic dedicated to Palestinian children. Ms. Stefano and Ms. Ziegel had the opportunity to meet Palestinian children and SACH medical staff. SoP staff were enthusiastic to join in the activity and said they were impressed with the Heart of the Matter program and that SoP had the opportunity to take part in the project activities. They also praised the progress made in the partnership between SACH and SoP since the USAID grant began in 2013.

ACTIVITY 5: CHANGE IN PERCEPTION SURVEY AND REPORT

SACH commissioned the survey company Midgam, led by Dr. Mina Zemach to conduct the external survey of Heart of the Matter under this USG. Midgam is one of Israel's leading survey companies that oftentimes conducts electoral polls. The objective of the survey is to understand the impact of Heart of the Matter on Palestinians and Israelis who have been involved in the program, and their opinions and attitudes towards one another. The external evaluation will analyze the following elements:

- The level of cooperation and communication between Palestinian and Israeli medical personnel participating in the program, including assessing the impact of participation in international conferences, seminars, work relations and cooperation between the physicians.
- The attitudes and feelings of Palestinian and Israeli parents and families of children hospitalized in the WMC during the program towards the members of each other's communities.
- The attitudes and feelings of Palestinian and Israeli youth participating in the SACH volunteer program towards the members of each other's communities.

During the second year of the project, Midgam completed the pilot of the evaluation and began to administer the surveys of families and physicians. SACH applied to the Helsinki Committee and Dr. Hourri represented the program on behalf of SACH. The Helsinki Committee at the WMC adjourns once a month and SACH's application was reviewed and approved in December 2014.

Midgam completed writing questionnaires for both physicians and families for all three stages of the evaluation during in the first quarter of Y2. The questionnaires were written in Hebrew and translated into Arabic. Midgam translated all questionnaires and submitted the documents to SACH for review and confirmation. SACH approved the translation and the pilot evaluation was run between late January and early February.

In total, 13 Palestinian families were interviewed during this pilot phase. Midgam decided to only interview families whose first visit at the WMC took place on the day of the interview in the pilot phase. Due to the low volume of families who visited the clinic for the first time, Midgam expanded the pilot to include families that have already visited the clinic in the past which resulted in a need to modify some of the survey questions. Midgam made the relevant changes to the questionnaires in April after this reporting period ended and began interviewing Israeli families. During the past quarter, Dr. Mina Zemach also met with the two Palestinian physicians currently training through SACH and administered the survey.

On July 29, 2015 Dr. Levav and Ms. Shaviv met with Dr. Zemach and were briefed on the progress made in the external evaluation. The participants discussed difficulties in reaching the number of Israeli and Palestinian families we agreed on and the length of the questionnaire for Palestinian families. It came to our attention that the interview process for Palestinian families is much longer than expected and many families are frustrated with this process. Dr. Zemach agreed to attend a Tuesday clinic to observe the interviewer and see how she can shorten the interview time tables.

On September 20, 2015 Midgam submitted a status report to SACH, including both quantitative and qualitative data of the survey's progress.

Midgam surveyed 53 Palestinians prior to treatment and 35 after treatment and 43 Israelis prior to treatment and 35 after treatment since the survey began. One of the concerns raised by Midgam in the report is the discomfort and unwillingness of Israeli families to provide their contact information and be contacted after they leave the hospital for the phase3 interview. As a result, fewer Israelis were interviewed in all three phases than SACH anticipated. While the surveyor is not directly related to the SACH program and has made it clear that the survey's purpose is to improve the services available to Israeli patients in an Israeli public hospital, SACH encountered great unwillingness to participate in all survey elements. Many Israelis have also reported that the structure of the survey, which begins with non-invasive and non-political questions, includes politically oriented questions towards the end. While we tried to soften some of the questions, many families ask to not be approached after they leave the hospital.

4. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MEDIA

SACH worked closely with local and international media and hosted visitors in Israel to raise public awareness to the program and USAID's support for our joint effort to reduce the effect of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis through the medical field. The SACH project was visited by 133 delegations and 189 groups from around the world during the second year of this USG. The visits included United States Congress representatives, Diplomatic delegations, Royal visitors, parliamentarian members, the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs, AIPAC and AIJAC visited SACH. These delegations toured the SACH children's home and the WMC. Group visits included university students from the United States and Europe who visited the SACH program and learned about our work and the Heart of the Matter project.



Left to right: Mr. Fisher, Dr. Hasan, Dr. Zarour, Dr. Sasson, Ambassador Andersen and Dr. Hourri

On March 25, 2015 Ambassador Lars Gaaborg Andersen, the EU Head of Delegation, visited the Heart of the Matter project at the WMC. The Heart of the Matter project is co-funded by the EU Partnership for Peace programme. This is the fifth grant SACH is awarded by the EU Partnership for Peace programme. Ambassador Andersen met with Dr. Berlowitch, Director of the WMC, and with Dr. Lior Sasson, Lead Surgeon and Head of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Department at the WMC and discussed the contribution Heart of the Matter has made on Israeli medical institutions like the WMC and how programs like this advance cooperation between Palestinian and Israeli medical practitioners. Mr. Andersen then met with Dr. Othman and Mr.

Fisher as well as other SACH staff. Mr. Fisher described the evolution of Heart of the Matter from a purely medical based project to a capacity-building program. The project grew to include different components with the goal of strengthening the PA's capacity to treat cardiac diseases suffered by children in PA hospitals in the long-term. Chief to this evolution is the inclusion of the outreach training program for Palestinian medical practitioners, a subject Mr. Andersen was especially interested in. Mr. Andersen met with Dr. Hasan and Dr. Zarour, two of the Palestinian physicians training through Heart of the Matter, and with Dr. Sion Hour, Director of the PICU at the WMC. Mr. Andersen then visited the Palestinian clinic and joined Dr. Akiva Tamir, Head of Pediatric Cardiology at the WMC, in an ECHO exam. Mr. Andersen spoke with Ms. Sarsur about her work at the Palestinian clinic and with Palestinian and Israeli families. He was then introduced to SoP volunteers and had an opportunity to meet with Palestinian families from the West Bank and Gaza.

On April 28, 2015 USAID's Ms. Cheryl Kamin, Office Director of Health and Humanitarian Assistance, Ms. Larisa Mori, Health Development Officer, Office of Health and Humanitarian Assistance and Mr. Hazem Khweis, the alternate AOR for the grant visited the SACH program at the WMC. USAID representatives met with Dr. Berlovich, Director of the WMC, and with SACH medical personnel including Dr. Sion Hour, Director of the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit and Dr. Akiva Tamir, Head of the Pediatric Cardiology Department at the WMC. SACH's medical staff has trained worldwide, including in leading medical centers in the United States, bringing with them the best medical practices and expertise to the WMC and the SACH program. For example, Dr. Lior Sasson, Lead Surgeon and Head of the Cardiothoracic Surgery Department completed his fellowship at the University of Michigan's Mott Children's Hospital and Dr. Sion Hour completed his fellowship at University of California, Los Angeles's Medical Center.



Left to right: Ms. Kamin, Mr. Khweis, Dr. Shakalia, Dr. Tamir, Dr. Assa, Ms. Mori, Mr. Fisher and Dr. Othman

The USAID representatives had the opportunity to observe a surgery of an Ethiopian child and discussed the SACH program with Dr. Sasson. The surgery was performed by Dr. Sasson with assistance of Dr. Zarour, one of the Palestinian physicians training through this USG and Dr. Yayu Mekonnen, an Ethiopian physician training through SACH to become Ethiopia's first pediatric cardiac surgeon. After observing the surgery, the USAID representatives visited the free weekly Palestinian clinic that is held for Palestinian children from the West Bank and Gaza. USAID representatives had the opportunity to meet with Palestinian patients and their families as well as with Dr. Fayez Shakalia, a referring physician from Gaza who was trained by SACH. USAID and Dr. Shakalia extensively discussed the medical situation in Gaza and the cooperation between medical practitioners from Gaza and Israel. USAID also met with SoP volunteers at the clinic.

The visit also included Mr. Fisher, Dr. Othman, Dr. Guttmann, Ms. Sarsur, and Ms. Shaviv.

The following articles about Heart of the Matter were published during the second year of this USG:

- On November 14, 2014 the Lancet published a “letter to the editor” report about SACH’s Heart of the Matter program. The Lancet is one of the most prestigious, important and well known medical journals among medical practitioners worldwide. To read the article in English, click [here](#).

On January 20, 2015, Richard Horton, editor in chief of the Lancet visited the WMC to learn about SACH and Heart of the Matter. Horton was accompanied by Lancet executive editor Tamara Lucas. Horton and Lucas met with WMC hospital director, Dr. Yitzhak Berlovich, toured the pediatric department and met with families from Gaza and the West Bank who were at the weekly clinic dedicated to Palestinian children. They also met children from Iraq, Syria, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zanzibar who are in Israel with SACH for life- saving heart surgery.

- On December 18, 2014 the De Redactie published a report about children from Gaza that are being treated by SACH. To watch the report in Dutch, click [here](#).

De Redactie’s representative in Israel contacted SACH and asked to cover SACH’s Heart of the Matter program in a video report. Dr. Sagi Assa, a cardiologist at WMC who recently completed a two-year fellowship, sponsored by SACH, at the Department of Congenital Cardiac Catheterizations at Deutsches Herzzentrum (DHZB) in Berlin, led the tour and was interviewed in the report in both Arabic and German. The report followed the story of a Palestinian child from Gaza and the emergency care he received through SACH at the WMC.

- On January 22, 2015 the Times of Israel published a blog post about a Bat Mitzvah project dedicated to the SACH program. The article mentioned SACH’s work with Palestinian families. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On February 3, 2015 the Jerusalem Post published a blog of a former SACH volunteer and her experience at the SACH program. The article mentioned SACH’s cross-border work with Palestinian patients. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On February 4, 2015 the Huffington Post published a blog of a former SACH volunteer and her experience at the SACH program. The article mentioned SACH’s cross-border work with Palestinian patients. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On March 5, 2015, the Five Towns Herald published an article about young Jewish leaders who visited the SACH program as part of their studies. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On April 1, 2015 the Jerusalem Post published an article titled Just look at Us Go. The article mentioned SACH’s work with Palestinian families. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On April 1, 2015 the Daily Trojan published an article titled Israeli Organizations Seek to Better Human Lives. The article discussed the Heart of the Matter project. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On April 8, 2015 the TLV Radio reported on the SACH program in its A Heartwarming Act report. Dr. Hourri was interviewed in the report. To listen to the report in English, click [here](#).
- On April 14, 2015, Walla published an article titled Angels in Blue and White: A Journey Following the Doctors who Save Babies’ Lives. To read the article in Hebrew, click [here](#).

- On April 19, 2015, Channel 1's Roim Olam show on the Israeli Television broadcasted a UNTV film report on the SACH program. The report focused on SACH's work with the Palestinian population. To watch the report in English, click [here](#).
- On May 22, 2015, the Canada Free Press published an article titled UN Casts Israel as Worst Violator of Health Rights in the World. The article discussed the humanitarian aid provided by Israeli medical institutions, especially for the Palestinian population. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On June 21, 2015, the Jewish Voice published an article titled American Academy Year in Review. The article highlighted SACH's work with Palestinian children and medical personnel. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On July 30, 2015, the JC.com blogged about a delegation of British parliament members in Israel and their visit to the SACH House in Holon. The parliament members extensively discussed the Heart of the Matter program with SACH staff. To read the blog in English, click [here](#).
- On July 30, 2015, the JC.com published a report titled Inside Israel's Secret Heart about the SACH project and our work with Palestinian children. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On August 4, 2015, the Jewish News published a report titled Opinion – Sir Eric Pickles: Israel's Leaders Must Do More to Root Out the Extremists from its Society. The report discussed the SACH project and the Heart of the Matter program. To read the report in English, click [here](#).
- In August, RYOT published a video about SACH's medical missions. The report mentioned SACH's work with Palestinian children. To watch the video in English, click [here](#).
- On August 9, 2015, the Conservative Home published a report titled Sir Eric Pickles MP. Business innovation. Humanitarian effort. And ceaseless security threats. What I found during a visit to Israel about the SACH project and the Heart of the Matter program. To read the article in English, click [here](#).
- On August 19, 2015, Alfred Muller published an article titled ISRAËLISCHE ARTSEN WINNEN KINDERHARTEN (Israeli Doctors who Win the Hearts of Children). The article highlighted the Heart of the Matter project. To read the article in Dutch, click [here](#).
- On September 8, 2015, Haaretz published an op-ed titled You Love Israel. You Hate the Occupation. A New Year's Dawning. What's Your Move?. The op-ed highlighted the SACH project as well as other USAID funded CMM projects. To read the article in English, click [here](#).

In addition to these articles, SACH sent newsletters during this past year to over 6,000 contacts, reporting activity and wishing happy holidays on Ramadan, Eid elFitr and Rosh Hashana. The newsletters included USAID's logo and pictures of a Palestinian child from the West Bank and from Gaza who were treated at WMC.

SACH has also continued to use social media throughout the past year to raise awareness to the program. In July 2014, SACH began publishing a weekly photo album called Every Child is Precious devoted to the Palestinian Clinic at WMC. The Facebook posts are updated every Tuesday and include pictures of children currently at WMC for treatment.

5. CHALLENGES

FIFTH QUARTER

The fifth quarter of the USG was characterized by slow progress in implementing some program activities and by continued difficulties in integrated CMM frameworks to the program's medical outputs. On December 17, 2014, Mr. Fisher, Dr. Othman and Ms. Shaviv met with USAID representatives to discuss the program's objectives, challenges and progress. The meeting was held in response to the discussions between USAID AOR at the time and Dr. Betawe during the first medical seminar. The medical outputs of the program are a stronghold of SACH and, with this USG, SACH has gradually integrated CMM elements into medical activities. This integration has been more difficult than originally anticipated and has taken longer than planned, especially due to the current political climate and the aftermath of the violence in summer 2014. It is also important to understand that while this reporting period marked the beginning of the second year of the USG, the progress in developing a cooperative relationship with PMOH and PMC is slow. Additionally, a delayed start to the program due to staff changes at SACH and the political environment during and following the conflict in the first year of the program impacted and delayed the implementation of program activities. This resulted in the rescheduling of many program activities into the second year of the program. For example, the two medical seminars that were originally scheduled to take place in the first year of the program were rescheduled to the second year of the program. At the meeting with USAID, SACH stressed that the challenge of working with PMOH and PMC have been repeatedly discussed and presented to USAID both formally and informally. The parties agreed that USAID will be informed more frequently on the progress and challenges in the program and that the implementation plan for the second year of the program will be approved once PMC finalizes the medical equipment pieces it is interested in purchasing through this USG.

Furthermore, while PMOH and PMC repeated that they are fully commitment to the program, this commitment has not fully translated into SACH's goal for PMOH and PMC taking on a greater and more independent role in the program. The frequency of activities is much slower than SACH hoped for the second year of the program and SACH has continued to take on a leadership role in many program activities. This has been a challenge throughout the second year of this USG.

SIXTH QUARTER

SACH continued to face difficulties in the timely recruitment of Palestinian physicians for the program and slow progress in program outputs during the sixth quarter of this USG. During this reporting period, travel costs for Palestinian youth volunteers to Israel proved to be more expensive than originally estimated. While the costs were not significantly higher than the grant budget, SACH expects to experience difficulties in fully meeting the budget lines that were proposed in the USAID grant application in 2012. In addition to SoP transportation costs, Dr. Othman's transportation costs in the West Bank also proved to be higher than originally budgeted. This challenge was addressed with a budget modification which was approved in the third year of this USG.

SEVENTH QUARTER

SACH faced major setbacks in reaching its attendance rates goals during the seventh quarter of this USG. This was especially evident in the medical seminar that took place on June 12, 2015. The slow start of the program in

the first two quarters of this USG resulted in shorter implementation period for program activities than originally planned. SACH planned to implement two medical seminars per year but reluctantly needed to implement four seminars in less than one year period. Due to the violent conflict in the summer of 2014 and both the Jewish and Muslim holidays, the four medical seminars had to be implemented between October 2014 and July 2015. The volume of activities was extremely difficult to attend for both Palestinian and Israeli medical staff.

SACH continued to face difficulties in running the SoP program as, with the exception of one volunteer date, none were attended by four participants during this reporting period. SoP explained that this is due to the examination period in both Israeli and Palestinian schools. SoP submits a list of volunteers to SACH two days before the volunteer day, usually listing four volunteers but usually only two or three actually turn up on the day. SACH is working with SoP to help address this issue in preparation for the next school year.

EIGHTH QUARTER

SACH faced several setbacks during this reporting period, especially in regard to issues of vetting for medical equipment companies and the SoP program. Since this reporting period ended, SACH was able to gather all the necessary information on each of the six medical equipment companies is plans on purchasing equipment from. However, this process proved to take much longer than anticipated and required several resubmissions of vetting documents. In addition to this, USAID decided not to vet SoP volunteers who have not turned 16 at the time the documents were submitted. This is likely to cause some confusion between SACH and SoP and SACH will have to determine which Seeds can volunteer in our program well in advance. This may also prove to be problematic as students turn 16 throughout the year, SACH will have to submit vetting forms throughout the year to USAID.

In addition to these technical grant management challenges, SACH continues to experience difficulties in running the program smoothly due to the deteriorating political situation in the region and the availability of Dr. Darwaze at the PMC. While the program is fully supported by Dr. Betawe, director of the PMC, Dr. Darwaze is the focal point for pushing for the program's continued implementation. Dr. Darwaze does not live in the PA, making his presence in the program stagnant. Meetings with the PMC are scheduled for when Dr. Darwaze is in Ramallah, but it is difficult to maintain the smooth and continuous relations with the PMC when Dr. Darwaze is away. The PMC has been unable to identify physicians, a cardiac surgeon and cardiologist, to join the outreach training program at the WMC and maintain their training positions as fellows. Dr. Zarour, who is training in cardiac surgery, is a junior surgeon and joined the outreach training program with little prior experience in surgery, and therefore will require at least 5 more years of training.

Furthermore, the political climate has made it more difficult for Palestinian participants to take part in program activities. For example, some Palestinian participants have had difficulties of picking up their permits from Beit El even if the permits were issued on time. Moreover, border crossings have become increasingly difficult in the past few months and currently Palestinians are afraid of entering and being in Israel.

6. PROJECT RESULTS AND IMPACT

Performance Indicator	Type of Indicator- Operational or Management	Planned Target (Year 2)	Total Actual (Year 2)
1.6.2-12 Number of USG-funded events, trainings, or activities designed to build support for peace or reconciliation on a mass scale.	Operational	70	59
1.6.2-14 Number of people participating in USG supported events, trainings or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation.	Operational	323	293
1.6.2-14a Number of men participating in USG supported events, trainings or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation	Operational	162	146
1.6.2-14b Number of women participating in USG supported events, trainings or activities designed to build mass support for peace and reconciliation	Operational	162	147
PRP165 - Percent increase in positive perception about the other (measured in doctors and families of dialogue group)	Operational	10%	N/A
PI 1 – number of Palestinian doctors, male and female, who have trained in specific medical fields to develop and improve their medical skill	Management	5	4
PI 2 – average number of training hours for Palestinian doctors	Management	9600	5014
PI 3 – number of medical seminars held	Management	4	4

PI 4 – number of participants in medical seminars that cooperatively discussed relevant medical issues (disaggregated by male and female and hospital affiliation)	Management	120	102
PI 5 – number of international medical conferences attended	Management	2	1
PI 6 – number of participants in international medical conferences (disaggregated by male and female and hospital affiliation)	Management	4	2
PI 7 – number of meetings/visits that involved SACH/WMC staff and PMOH/PMC staff collaboratively working together towards establishing a pediatric cardiac care unit at the PMC.	Management	3	2
PI 8 – number of dialogue group sessions	Management	42	37
PI 9 –number of Palestinian and Israeli female and male family members participating in the dialogue group	Management	126	125
PI 10 – number of volunteer days	Management	17	15
PI 11 – number of female and male, Israeli and Palestinian, Seed Volunteers	Management	68	51
PI 12 – medical equipment purchased for WMC and PMC	Management	5	0